

REMARKS

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

Claim 17 is added herein. Support for claim 17 can be found, for example, on page 25, line 14 to page 29, line 22 of the specification.

Therefore, claims 13-17 remain pending for reconsideration which is requested.

No new matter has been added. The Examiner's rejections are traversed below.

II. CLAIMS 13-16 ARE REJECTED UNDER 35 U.S.C. 103(a) AS BEING UNPATENTABLE OVER SHIMAN ET AL. (U.S. 2002/019827) IN VIEW OF PROMPT ET AL. (U.S. 6,985,905) IN FURTHER VIEW OF VOTICKY ET AL. (U.S. 6,351,764)

The Examiner asserts Shiman et al. (Shiman) teaches an e-mail client apparatus for transmitting and receiving e-mail messages as recited, for example, in claim 13, with some exceptions. The Examiner concedes Shiman does not specifically teach that the sender addresses comprise a plurality of labels. Therefore, the Examiner relies on Prompt et al. (Prompt) to teach an e-mail sorting system, in which the e-mails are sorted according to the sender, and labels are assigned to them according to their level in the hierarchy. (citing Abstract and figure 35 of Prompt). The Examiner further concedes the combination of Shiman and Prompt does not specifically teach that the labels represent domain names. Therefore, the Examiner relies on Voticky to teach the arrangement of e-mail messages by domain name.

The present invention as set forth, for example, in claim 13, provides a unit that "sorts e-mail messages into a hierarchical structure according to sender addresses each comprising a plurality of labels representing different levels of domain names, referring first to the label representing a top-level domain." (see claim 13 and figures 13 – 16 of the Specification). In contrast, Shiman teaches an e-mail sorting system, presenting e-mails in a staggered fashion sorted specifically by: date, subject, author, author then subject, subject then author, subject then date, author then date, author then subject then date, and subject then author then date. (see paragraph 0157 of Shiman). Shiman further teaches "typically, the date is used as a final sorting order." (see paragraph 0157 of Shiman).

Shiman does not teach or suggest sorting e-mails according to sender addresses each comprising a plurality of labels representing different levels of domain names, referring

first to the label representing a top-level domain, as recited, for example, in claim 13.

Shiman specifically sorts e-mails based on author, subject and date. Shiman is not concerned with the domain name of the e-mail address at all. Therefore, Shiman does not structure the hierarchy of the e-mails *according to sender addresses each comprising a plurality of labels representing different levels of domain names*, as recited, for example, in claim 13.

The Examiner cites figure 35 and the Abstract of Prompt to teach an email sorting system, where the e-mails are sorted by the sender and labels are assigned to them. However, the abstract of Prompt teaches a virtual directory of information, wherein the virtual directory can be presented in an electronic mail format. Furthermore, figure 35, cited by the Examiner, simply "shows how display records may be presented in either "1*n" default format or "n*13" default format, where n=3 in this particular example." (see paragraph 0238 of Prompt). Therefore, Prompt, like Shiman, is not concerned with the domain name of the e-mail address at all. Prompt, simply allows the hierarchy of the information contained in the database to be displayed in an e-mail, web-browser, spreadsheet, or any other application that displays data. (see paragraph 0138 of Prompt). Prompt does not disclose or suggest sorting *"e-mail messages into a hierarchical structure according to sender addresses each comprising a plurality of labels representing different levels of domain names, referring first to the label representing a top-level domain,"* as recited, for example, in claim 13. Therefore, Prompt fails to cure the deficiencies of Shiman.

The Examiner relies on Voticky to teach the arrangement of e-mail messages by domain name. Voticky teaches a method that "provides for prioritization based on the expected incoming e-mail messages (i.e., according to known e-mail address information, domain name information, or other similar characteristics)." (see paragraph 0027 of Voticky). Similarly, Voticky fails to disclose or suggest sorting *"e-mail messages into a hierarchical structure according to sender addresses each comprising a plurality of labels representing different levels of domain names, referring first to the label representing a top-level domain,"* as recited, for example, in claim 13. Therefore, Voticky fails to cure the deficiencies of Shiman and Prompt.

It is submitted that the present claimed invention of claims 13-16 patentably distinguishes over Shiman in view of Prompt and further in view of Voticky. Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

III. NEW CLAIM 17

New claim 17 is added herein. Claim 17 recites in part, "*a sorting unit which sorts e-mail messages into a hierarchical structure according to a user selectable parent-child relationship attribute and the sender address.*" Support for the added claim 17 can be found, for example, on page 25, line 14 to page 29, line 22 of the specification. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted, claim 17 is allowable.

IV. CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

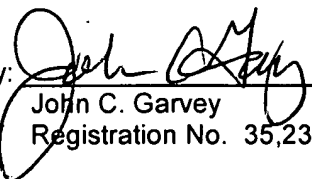
Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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